

Maryland Historical Trust

State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic BENJAMIN CROWNER HOUSE

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 950 West Benning Road ___ not for publication

city, town Galesville ___ vicinity of congressional district

state MD county Anne Arundel

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Harriett Hull et al.

street & number Box 62 telephone no.: 798-1270

city, town Galesville state and zip code Md. 20765

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Anne Arundel Co. Registry of Deeds liber 2501

street & number folio 250

city, town Annapolis state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Historic Sites Inventory

date ___ federal ☒ state ☒ county ___ local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Annapolis state MD

7. Description

Survey No. AA-917

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date of move _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Benjamin Crowner House is a modest one-story bungalow with hipped roof and ridge, and a partial-width front porch with shed roof.

There are three bays across the front: a central door and two windows with 2 over 2 double hung sash. Also a hipped dormer at front center and back center, attic level, each containing a single 2-paned sash.

One chimney, offset at left end of the roof ridge.

Original weatherboard siding is probably underneath the asbestos shingles.

Interior was not surveyed.

No central plumbing.

The outhouse at rear is a re-cycled "bohicky shack". There are a number of these "shacks" scattered around Galesville being used today as outhouses or storage sheds. Originally they were built as 2-family housing for transient workers from Baltimore who came seasonally to work in Galesville's three tomato canning factories. The local blacks referred to the transients as "bohickys" (sp.?). The era of the tomato-canning industry in Galesville stretched from before 1900 to perhaps 1940.

8. Significance

Survey No. AA-917

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Black History

Specific dates	Builder/Architect
check: Applicable Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D and/or Applicable Exception: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G Level of Significance: <input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local	

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Benjamin Crowner (born 1878 - died 1962) built his house in 1919 at the age of 41. His ancestors had been living in Galesville for about 50 years prior to this date. In fact, his grandmother, in 1883, was one of only six black families owning land out of a total of 32 black households in Galesville. Since shortly after slavery ended in 1864 until today, the Crowners have been active members of the Galesville black community.

According to the 1860 Federal Census, Benjamin Crowner Sr. (b.1822 - d.by 1870) and his wife Henrietta (b.1824 - d.by 1894) and four children, all free blacks, were living in the area of Franklin Manor (near Churchton), while Ben worked as a "Farm-hand" for Thomas Weems. The 1860 Martenet Map shows Thomas Weems' property bordering the Chesapeake Bay from "Franklin Pt." southward.

By the time of the 1870 Census, "Henny Crowner", a widow, and five sons were resettled in Galesville. In 1883, Henrietta purchased for \$268.75 3-1/8 acres on the south side of Main Street, slightly west of the new Ebenezer A.M.E. Church. (Liber SH 22/Folio 216)

In 1907, Henrietta's second son Philip's oldest son Benjamin married Margaret Ann Hicks who also lived on Main St. in Galesville. The same year, 1907, Margaret's father, Alexander Hicks, bought one acre on W. Benning Rd. in Galesville (GW 83/38) and built a substantial 2-story house there (which burned c. 1960). In 1918 Margaret acquired 1/2 acre adjacent to her father's land (WNW 9/96). Here she and Benjamin built the Benjamin Crowner House (AA-917).

Benjamin worked as an independent waterman on the Bay. He had his own boat and crab pots. Margaret cooked, picked and sold the crabs he caught. She was a "huckster" by her daughter Harriett's account. She was also a teacher at the black elementary school, president and treasurer of the PTA, secretary of the Ebenezer Church, and owner/operator of a lunch restaurant. Benjamin and Margaret both died in 1962.

Two Crowner family houses which occupied Henrietta's land on Main Street from circa the late 1800's until the 1950's are gone now, but the Crowner family graveyard still remains, at the rear of the property, on "Lot No. 1". Three headstones, a concrete vault, and numerous unmarked grave mounds represent the members of at least four generations of Crowners. (See Liber SH 48/Folio 58, 6/17/1894 for a plat of Henrietta's land, located across from present firehouse.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. AA-917

Federal Census records for A.A.County: 1860, 8th Election District, p.107; 1870, 1st Dist. p.41;
1880, 1st Dist., p.59,62; 1900, 1st Precinct, 1st Dist. p.4B.
Interviews: Harriett Hull, James Crowner, Alma Strong, William R. Woodfield Sr.
Martenet's Map of A.A. County, Md., 1860.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name Deale 1957; photorevised 1970Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan Wetherill, Volunteerorganization Anne Arundel Co. Committèe/MHTdate 5/86street & number P.O. Box 1573

telephone _____

city or town Annapolisstate MD 21404

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

CROWNER/HICKS FAMILY TREES
Galesville, Md.

Benjamin Crowner (1822-by1870)

married

Henrietta --- (1824-by1894)



children:

Martha (b.1842)

Lloyd (b.1854) m'd Caroline

Philip (b.1856) m'd Caroline (b.1864)

Benjamin (b.1860)

Thomas (b.1861) m'd Alice (b.1866) → children:

Charles (b.1862)

married

Eliza White (b.1866)



children:

Martha (b.1882)

Sarah E. (b.1887)

Annie (b.1892)

Lillie A. (b.1894)

Henny (b.1896)

Daniel G. (b.1899)

children:

Benjamin (1878-1962)

Robert

James

Daughter

Sadie (b.1891)

Rinaldo (b.1892)

Richard (b.1894)

Grasham (b.1895)

Levy (b.1897)

Alexander Hicks (b.1866)

married

Elizabeth



children:

Margaret Ann (1884-1962)

Edward m. Grace

George (widower by 1953)

Lelia m. William McDaniel

Elizabeth m. McKinley Watkins

Beatrice m. Julius Miles

James Albert m. Estelle

married



children:

Benjamin (d.1972) m'd Nannie

Alexander

Harriett (b.1918) m'd ---Hull

James (b.1923)

Prepared by S. Wetherill 5/86

Birthdates taken from Federal Census records.



AA-917

Benjamin Cronner House

A.A. Co., Md.

S. Weatherill, 2/85

SW facade

~~ROLL 1~~

~~FRAME 22 (poor)~~



AA-917 BENT. CROWNER HSE

SHACK BEHIND BENT. CROWNER'S HSE.

USED TO HOUSE TWO "BOHICKY" FAMILIES,
migrant white workers from Baltimore, during 1920's.

~~Roll #8~~

~~FRAME 21~~

S. Wetherill, 2/85

East corner of main house.

A.A.Co. Md.



AA - 917

Benjamin Crowner House

A.A.Co., Md.

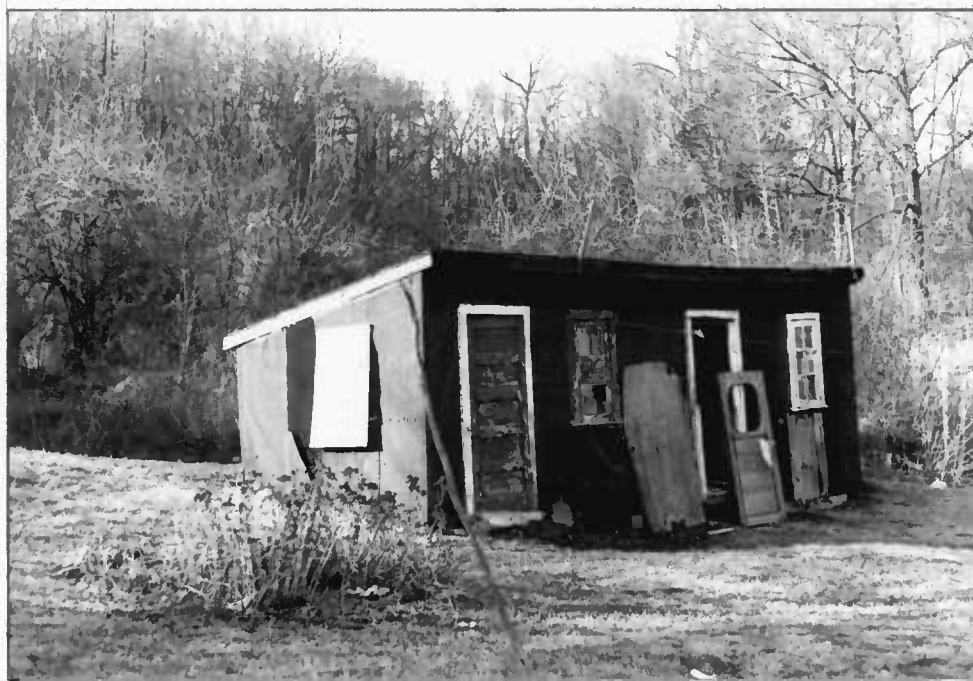
~~Roll # 5~~

~~FRAME 4~~

S. Wetherill 2/85

South corner

2/85



AA-917 BENJAMIN CROWNER HOUSE

Another "bohicky shack" in Salesville,
similar to the one behind Benj. Crouner Hse.

A.A. Co. Md.

Roll #8

FRAME 27

S. Wehrull, 2/85

S. Corner, located near Schoolhouse (AA-914)



AA-917

Benjamin Crowner House

A.A. Co., Md.

~~Roll # 7~~

~~FRAME 23~~

S. Weherill, 2/85

West Corner



AA-917 BENJAMIN CROWNER HOUSE

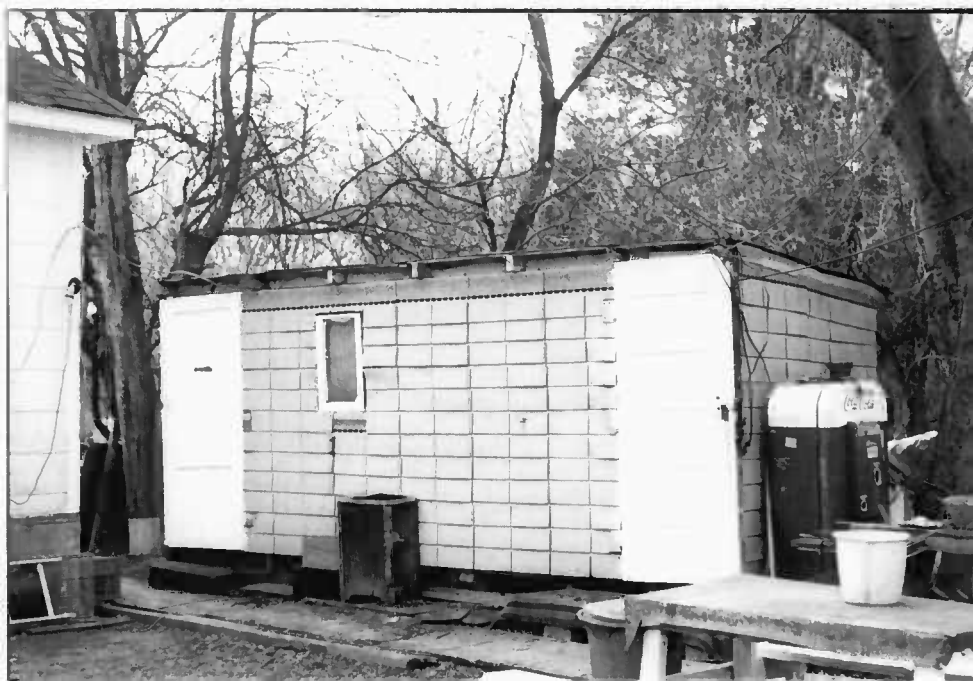
Another "bohicky shack" similar to the
one behind Benj. Crowner's Hse, Galetsville.
A.A. Co; Md.

~~ROLL # 8~~

~~FRAME 26~~

S. Wetherill 2/85

West corner, located near School Hse. (AA-914)



AA-917

Benjamin Crowner House

A.A.Co. Md.

S. Wehrill, 2/17/85

"bohicky shack" (now an outhouse),
facing SE at rear North corner
of main house.



AA-917

2/17/85

AA/MHT member
Dear Johnson, (background)
James Crowner, occupant
of The Benjamin
Crowner Hse (AA917)

photo by S. Weatherill